

When we were negotiating the surface transportation reauthorization bill, it was not easy to convince everyone that this would be a worthy program. But just look at the overwhelming need across the country and the expressions of interest in the first round of grant awards—more than 350 applications nationwide—that far outpaced the amount of funding available.

There are so many worthy projects across the country. They never received enough planning and consideration through the Federal policy framework that existed prior to President Biden's focus on equity, the bipartisan infrastructure bill, and Reconnecting Communities.

I think the overwhelming need we are seeing across the country will strongly support the program's continuation and expansion into one of the U.S. Department of Transportation's signature initiatives.

Last month, after all the work of developing legislation and enacting it into law and standing up the program, the Department of Transportation awarded the very first round of Reconnecting Communities grants.

I am proud that after all the work on the bipartisan infrastructure law, Baltimore City was one of the first recipients of the Federal funding under the Reconnecting Communities Program. Baltimore will receive a \$2 million grant for planning, to which the State of Maryland, under Governor Moore, is adding \$400,000.

This funding is going to start an important process of planning and engagement with the people of Baltimore to develop a proposal, one that I hope will move forward in the coming years with Federal support for the construction of a project of great significance to Baltimore and its future.

This award for Baltimore and the establishment of the Reconnecting Communities Program is an important milestone in the history of our Nation's approach to infrastructure. For far too long, our national infrastructure policies contributed to tearing down communities while we built our transportation networks. With the Reconnecting Communities Program, our Federal infrastructure policy will no longer tear communities apart. Rather,

it must build up, reconnect, and support them.

With that, Madam President, I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M.
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 3:48 p.m., adjourned until Friday, March 10, 2023, at 9:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate March 9, 2023:

THE JUDICIARY

MARIA ARAUJO KAHN, OF CONNECTICUT, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE SECOND CIRCUIT.
JAMES EDWARD SIMMONS, JR., OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA.

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

DANIEL I. WERFEL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE COMMISSIONER OF INTERNAL REVENUE FOR THE TERM EXPIRING NOVEMBER 12, 2027.